

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 346

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EGEN, EEC, COMECON

SUBJECT: WELLENSTEIN ON EC-COMECON MEETING

REF: A. MOSCOW 1764 B. USMISSION GENEVA 894 C. USEC BRUSSELS 602

D. USEC BRUSSELS 908

1. SUMMARY: EC COMMISSION DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS WELLENSTEIN CONFIRMS TO US THAT COMECON REPRESENTATIVES SOUGHT TO AVOID ANY SUBSTANCE AND SEEMED MAINLY INTERESTED IN THE PRESTIGE ASPECT OF THE FEBRUARY 4-6 TALKS IN MOSCOW, AS WELL AS PLANS FOR AN EVENTUAL VISIT BY ORTOLI. THE COMECON SIDE INDICATED THAT THE ONLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MANDATE IT HAD FROM ITS MEMBER STATES WAS TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH

THE EC. AFTER THE EC DELEGATION'S RETURN, THE COMMISSION CONFIRMED BY TELEGRAM TO COMECON THE INVITATION FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS IN BRUSSELS WELLENSTEIN EXTENDED IN MOSCOW. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING A MEETING WITH MISSION OFFICERS FEBRUARY 12, EC COMMISSION DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS WELLENSTEIN PROVIDED US WITH HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THE RECENT EC-COMECON MEETING IN MOSCOW. HE CONFIRMED AND EXPANDED ON REPORTS IN REFTELS A AND B THAT THE COMECON REPRESENTATIVES SOUGHT TO AVOID ANY DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANCE AND THAT THEIR PRIMARY INTEREST WAS TO EXPLOIT THE PRESTIGE INVOLVED IN A MEETING WITH EC REPRESENTATIVES. THE COMECON LEGAL COUNSEL PRESENT FOR THE MEETINGS FRANKLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT UNDER THE ORGANIZATION'S STATUTES THE COMECON SIDE WAS ONLY ABLE TO DISCUSS MATTERS ON WHICH IT HAD A MANDATE FROM MEMBER STATES, AND THAT THE ONLY MANDATE THEY PRESENTLY HAD WAS TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE EC.

3. THUS, WELLENSTEIN CONTINUED, THE COMMISSION'S FEARS THAT THE COMECON REPRESENTATIVES MIGHT PROPOSE AN OVERALL TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE EC (REFTEL C) PROVED GROUNDLESS. FAR FROM IT, THEY MADE NO CLAIM WHATSOEVER TO HAVE ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRADE POLICY AND INDICATED THAT THEY WERE UNABLE TO DISCUSS ANY TOPIC BEARING ON FOREIGN TRADE. WELLENSTEIN THEN RECALLED THAT IT HAD NEVERTHELESS BEEN THE COMECON SIDE WHICH HAD PROPOSED A VAGUE AGENDA ITEM ON "CONDITIONS OF TRADE" FOR THE MOSCOW TALKS. WHEN WELLENSTEIN SOUGHT TO PRENEURATE WHAT THEY HAD IN MIND, THEY SPOKE ONLY OF "TRADE IN THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, " AND ASKED DEFENSIVELY HOW IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE NOT TO INCLUDE SUCH AN ITEM ON THE AGENDA FOR THE ORTOLI-FADEYEV MEETING.

4. WELLENSTEIN FURTHER OBSERVED THAT THE COMECON REPRESENTATIVES WERE TOTALLY UNPREPARED TO DISCUSS ANY OF THE OTHER AGENDA ITEMS EITHER, PREFERRING TO CONCENTRATE ON THE SCHEDULE FOR ORTOLI'S VISIT TO MOSCOW. WELLENSTEIN SAID HE PURPOSELY AVOIDED ANY COMMITMENT THAT ORTOLI WOULD COME, AND VOLUNTEERED THAT HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS ANY DETAILS OF A VISIT BY EITHER ORTOLI OR SOAMES. DESPITE EFFORTS TO EXTRACT POSITION PAPERS FROM THE COMECON REPRESENTATIVES ON AGENDA ITEMS, THE ONLY RESULT WAS THE INTRODUCTION OF TWO VACUOUS REPORTS WHICH ADDED NOTHING TO THE PROCEEDINGS.

5. TOWARD THE END OF THE THREE-DAY MEETING WELLENSTEIN TURNED ASIDE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EFFORTS BY THE COMECON REPRESENTATIVES TO INDUCE THE EC DELEGATION TO EXTEND ITS STAY IN MOSCOW, AND COUNTERED WITH AN INVITATION FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS IN BRUSSELS (ON AN UNSPECIFIED DATE). THERE WAS NO IMMEDIATE RESPONSE, AND THE COMMISSION CONFIRMED THE INVITATION IN A CABLE SENT TO MOSCOW FEBRUARY 10.

6. WELLENSTEIN SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY STRUCK BY THE LOW CALIBRE OF SOME OF THE COMECON PARTICIPANTS, ALTHOUGH AMONG THE EXPERTS WHO WERE

OCCASIONALLY CALLED INTO THE MEETINGS HE DETECTED A NUMBER OF
CLEVER INDIVIDUALS WHO SEEMED DELIGHTED AT THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK
TO "OUTSIDERS." WELLENSTEIN SAID HE OBSERVED OCCASIONAL
"DIVERGENCES" AMONG THE COMECON PARTICIPANTS AND THE EXPERTS, AND
SEVERAL TIMES THE HEAD OF THE COMECON GROUP INTERVENED TO STOP AN
EASTERN "EXPERT" FROM SPEAKING. GREENWALD

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